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Home > Public and media > News

Go to top >

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## Speakers of the Seimas and of the Canadian House of Commons discuss Canadian and Baltic security projects and support for Ukraine

*Press release, 29 January 2024*

At a meeting in Ottawa with Greg Fergus, Speaker of the House of Commons of Canada, Viktorija Čmilytė-Nielsen, Speaker of the Seimas, discussed Canada's contribution to the security of the Baltic Sea Region, including the NATO Force Integration Unit in Lithuania, deployment of the Alliance's enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup in Latvia, and, more generally, Canada's plans to expand its forces in Latvia.

'The Baltic States and Canada are close NATO partners, working together for a safer Euro-Atlantic region. Meanwhile, the decision to open the Canadian Embassy in Vilnius creates new opportunities for strengthening the relations between our countries and elaborating our bilateral agenda,' said Ms Čmilytė-Nielsen after the meeting.



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*Photo by Olga Posaškova, Office of the Seimas*

Ms Čmilytė-Nielsen and her Canadian counterpart also discussed the necessity to continue supporting Ukraine and underlined that the issue must now take precedence and unite all political forces.

'Now is a critical moment in further strengthening the support for Ukraine. All signs indicate that Russia is preparing for a long-term confrontation not only with Ukraine, but also with the West. At the meeting, we talked about the need to remain united in supporting Ukraine. Currently, securing military support for Ukraine and its membership of the European Union and NATO are our top priorities,' the Speaker of the Seimas said.

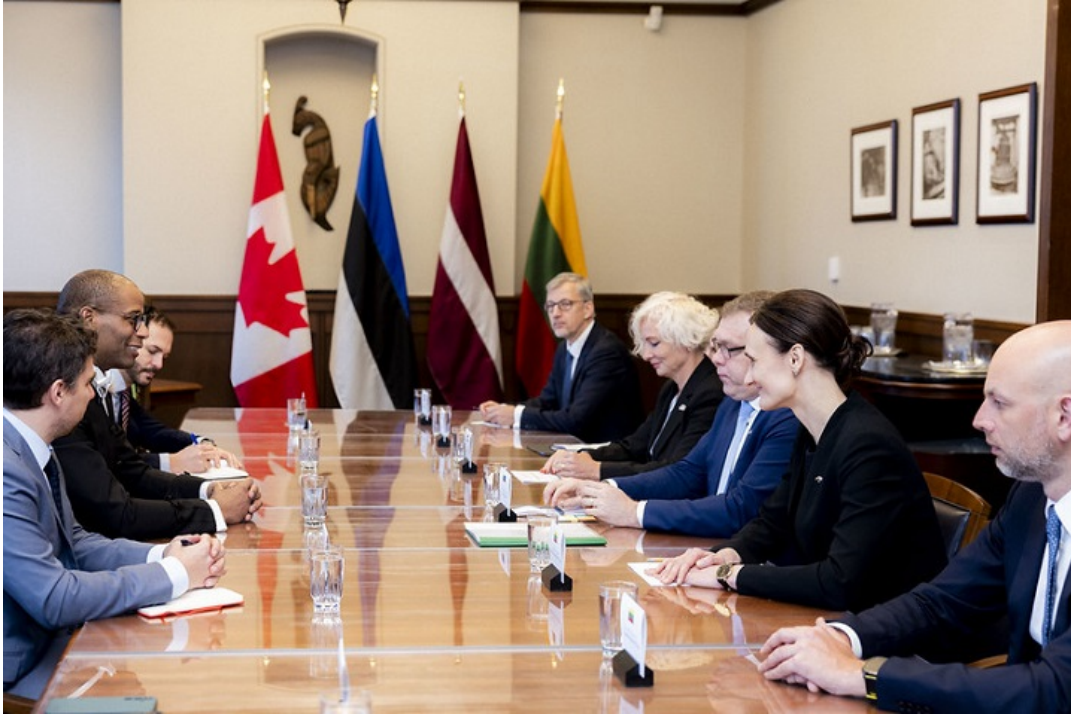


*Photo by Olga Posaškova, Office of the Seimas*

Ms Čmilytė-Nielsen went on saying that the Baltic States were highly appreciative of Canada's robust policy of sanctions against Russia, which was consistent with the European Union's position, fully supported the initiatives to use the frozen Russian assets, and were looking forward to the

outcome of the G7 discussions.

‘There is also a need for a special international tribunal to investigate the crimes of aggression against Ukraine. It is necessary to bring those responsible for war crimes and violations of fundamental international principles to account not only on behalf of Ukraine but also on behalf of the international community. This is the only way to meet the expectations of the Ukrainian people,’ the Speaker of the Seimas said.

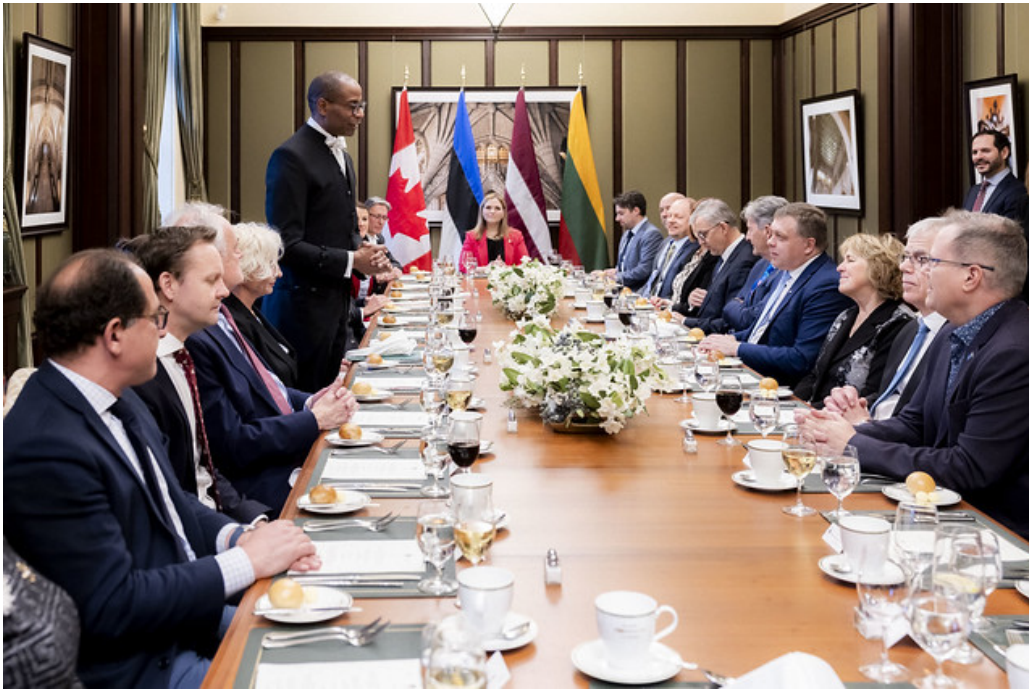


*Photo by Olga Posaškova, Office of the Seimas*

The Speaker of the Seimas will later attend a sitting of the House of Commons of Canada and a presentation of the Baltic delegations to the Members of the House, as well as a meeting with Members of the Canada–Nordic-Baltic Parliamentary Friendship Group.

On 30 January, Ms Čmilytė-Nielsen and the Speakers of Parliaments of the Baltic States will continue their working visit to the United States of America. In Washington, they are scheduled to meet with Mike Johnson, Speaker of the House of Representatives, as well as senators and other key policy-makers responsible for security and defence matters.

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